



Wisconsin SBA 2003 Emerging Small Business Person

Kevin D. Schippers, President



Kevin Schippers E & G Franchise Systems, Inc. began in 1992 when he was the owner and operator of the original Erbert & Gerbert's Subs and Clubs store in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Kevin and his wife, Beth, had started that business in 1988 and were realizing they had developed a pretty good niche with a creative menu and stable margins. He then thought, "Why couldn't this work as well in other locations as it does here?" From there, E & G Franchise Systems, Inc. was born.

Kevin's dad told his children bedtime stories based on two characters, Erbert & Gerbert Herbert. The two boys rode on Halley's Comet and because Halley's traveled faster than the speed of light, they were all able to go back in time. Kevin was able to use the stories his father

had created as a tribute to his dad as well as building a superior marketing concept for his company. Each sandwich was named after a character from Erbert & Gerbert's adventure stories.

Erbert & Gerbert's unique marketing plan targets college students and local business workers. We are one of the only sub shops to offer a low cost, efficient delivery service, available from mid-morning to late night, tailor-made for today's fast-paced lifestyle.

Erbert & Gerbert's corporate mission is:

- To make a positive impact on the American dream, one family at a time,
- Deal with all associates as friends, maintaining total honesty and personal integrity,
- Provide cooperative support and the security of experienced guidance to those who have made a commitment to the quality and consistency that the E & G logo represents, and
- We believe that people perform exceptionally well when they are treated fairly, honestly and with respect.

The franchise office for E & G is located in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Current restaurant locations include eleven in Wisconsin, six in Minnesota and one in North Dakota. Contracts for twelve more E & G restaurants have been signed.

The success that Kevin has been able to achieve with his franchise business has not come without adversity. Several obstacles along the way have tested both his will and his problem-solving abilities. Kevin believes that a true test of character is how one handles adversity. Kevin has consistently demonstrated this belief throughout the growing pains and lessons learned while developing a business. He also has learned that there is no substitute for good sound management practices both at the franchise office and for the individual owner/operators.

The system that he supplies to franchisees is based on proven ratio analysis, conducted at the right location. He is constantly seeking new ideas that will help bring even greater success to both the franchise company and its family of owners.

One of the most important concepts of the business is their dedication to customer service. Without their customers, they would cease to exist; which is why they firmly believe in giving back to their communities. Kevin is a financial supporter & food donator to Hope Gospel Mission, the only rescue mission for homeless men in the Cippewa Valley. He is an active volunteer leading youth programs at Eau Claire Gospel Church. In addition, Kevin co-hosts a weekly call-in program coordinated by the church and broadcast on the local Public Broadcast System channel. He has been a member of the Eau Claire Chamber of Commerce since he began in business. He is a member of the local chapter of The Executive Committee, an international organization of CEO's who meet and share ideas and suggestions that will help the business climate and quality of life in the Chippewa Valley. Kevin is a yearly contributor to the Christmas for Kids program sponsored by local Eau Claire radio stations. His contribution provides gifts and holiday food items for local families who without assistance would not be able to celebrate Christmas.

Developing any business, but especially a franchise, involves a learning curve. Kevin accepted the challenges of learning the legalities, defining guidelines, writing contracts, and choosing and trusting people. Lessons were learned, many times the hard way. Kevin never let issues deter his resolve. He studied tirelessly, hired consultants, conversed with experts, and followed the advice of mentors. He kept things together by honoring, respecting, protecting, and trusting people. He demonstrated honesty without question and learned to turn "stumbling blocks" into "stepping stones."

SBA is proud to select Kevin for this award as he demonstrates all the qualities of an entrepreneur as his business continues to grow.

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